

Homelessness: Urban, Rural, Adults, and Children



Community Garden Guidelines

- **Respect confidentiality.**
- **Respect name pronunciations + pronouns + identities.**
- **Speak from your own experiences.**
- **Impact over intent.**
- **Step up, step back be aware of airtime.**
- **Practice critical compassion assume best intentions.**
- **Lean into discomfort break silences.**
- **Nobody holds the corner on knowledge, we are all here to learn + grow <3.**

Community Garden Guidelines (continued)

Whatever is said here stays
here, but whatever is learned
here leaves here :)

Who we are...



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AIU8

Appalachia Intermediate Unit 8

ESL Education: Despite being red, Mars is actually a cold place

Uplifting ESL programs: Jupiter is the biggest planet in the Solar System

Volunteering time to support students: Saturn is composed of hydrogen and helium

Bridge Beyond

Advocacy: Calling for de-stigmatization of those experiencing homelessness

Empowering: College students are a well of untapped potential

Outreach: Connecting well established organizations with up to date resources



What is Homelessness?

Defined by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

- Individual or family who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence.



History of Homelessness

- **1870's** Industrial Revolution, individuals move from rural areas to cities searching for jobs, many live in single room occupancy hotels.
- **1930's** the Great Depression leads to a spike in those experiencing homelessness.
- **1960's** the US Department of Housing and Urban Development established.
- **1977** Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act, first federal legislation to address homelessness.

History of Homelessness (continued)

- **1997** Stewart B. McKinney Act authorized the creation of the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH) to coordinate organizations addressing homelessness.
- **2009** HEARTH Act enacted to address homelessness by attempting to improve access to affordable housing, expanding definitions of “homeless.”
- **2021** the U.S. is facing the most severe housing crisis in its history. U.S. Census Data ([aspeninstitute.org](https://www.aspeninstitute.org)) estimate **30-40 MILLION** people are at risk of eviction.

Factors that influence Homelessness

- Evictions from homes due to the skyrocketing increase in housing costs
 - Gentrification
 - Harmful redistricting
- Racism, discrimination
- Disabilities
- Fleeing domestic violence
- Unemployment
- Lack of access to mental/addiction health services
- Poverty
- Natural Disasters



Myths about Homelessness

- “There are enough services to support the homeless.”
- “Homeless people should just find a job.”
- “Sufficient affordable housing will end homelessness.”

Unfortunate Truth

“Every year in this country, people are evicted from their homes not by the tens of thousands or even the hundreds of thousands but by the millions.”

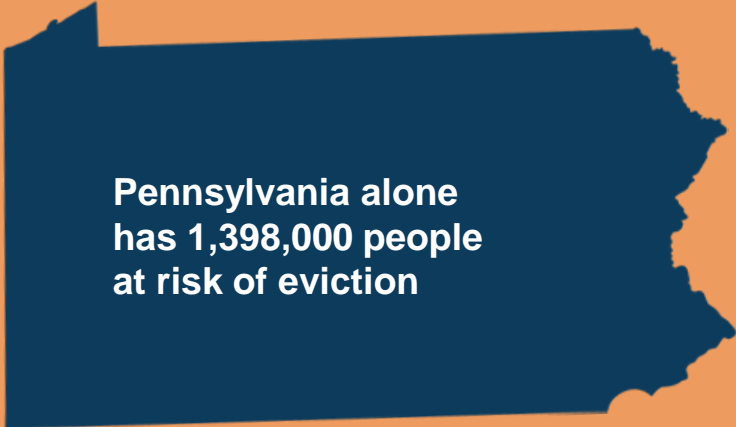
-*Matthew Desmond,*

“Evicted: Poverty and Profit in the American City.”



Homelessness in Pennsylvania

- Evictions from homes due to the skyrocketing increase in housing costs, especially in Pittsburgh and Philadelphia.
- Nearly 40,000 students were identified as experiencing homelessness by the PA Education Department in 2019-20

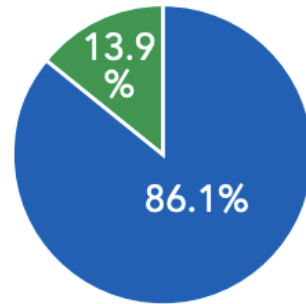
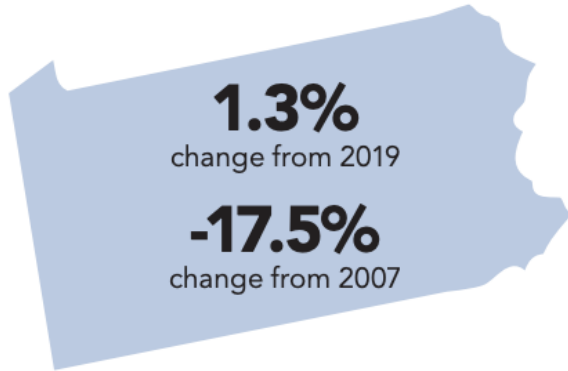


**Pennsylvania alone
has 1,398,000 people
at risk of eviction**

Homelessness in Pennsylvania (continued)

PENNSYLVANIA

10.4 in every **10,000**
people were experiencing
homelessness



■ Unsheltered (1,857)
■ Sheltered (11,518)

Total Homeless, 2020
13,375

Estimates of Homelessness

8,585 individuals

4,790 people in families
with children

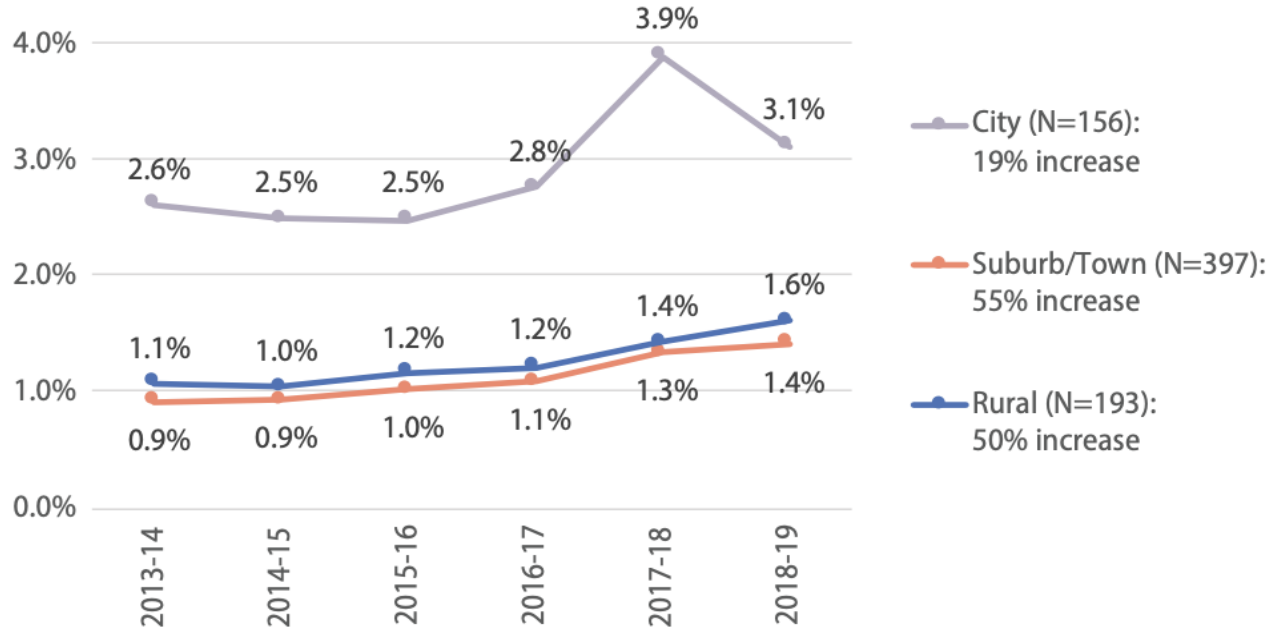
716 unaccompanied
homeless youth

977 veterans

1,689 chronically homeless
individuals

Different experiences in the Urban and Rural areas of PA

Figure 11. Percent Students Experiencing Homelessness in Pennsylvania, by Geographic Type, 2013-14 to 2018-19



Stories of Rural and Urban Homelessness



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Child Homelessness and Poverty

- Of the 15 most industrialized countries in the world, the United States, the richest nation in the world, is fifth from the bottom in child poverty. 20.5% of children aged 0-17 live in poverty; **poverty and homelessness go hand-in-hand** (*Forbes*).
- How many teachers know that statistically, more than 1 of every 5 children they teach lives in poverty?
 - According to childrensdefense.org, in the 2017-2018 school year, 1.5 million children enrolled in public schools experienced homelessness. It is well established that this number is rising.

How has AIU8 been working with this community?

- The teachers and staff at the **Greater Johnstown Career and Technology Center, Johnstown, PA**, at one time a full-day high school (academics and technology), asked for a room to serve poor and homeless children.
- We were given an excellent private room by the auditorium.
 - We stocked it with food, clothing and even toys, all donated by staff or others.
 - Children who wore the same clothes every day, or privately shared information with staff that indicated homelessness.
 - The school nurses offered homeless students
 - Underarm deodorant, soap, shaving soap and razors, feminine products, after shave, combs, hair spray



How has Bridge Beyond been reforming in this space?

- Comprehensive up to date resource directories.
- First branch chapter in Pittsburgh in collaboration with the University of Pittsburgh.
- Process of developing of an App to help users access the directory.
- Resource bag outreach and food donations to the Red Door Ministry.



How can you help recover/rebuild?



How can you help recover/rebuild? (continued)



Ways you can get involved

- Educate yourself
 - Read, listen to podcasts.
 - Research non profits doing the work to help those experiencing homelessness.
 - Attend amazing conferences like the PA Community Alliance Summit
- Start volunteering at local shelters
- Donate to organizations whether that be money or goods
- Connect others to people in your networks who you think might be of help!



Any questions? Please feel free to reach out and build community with us!



Website: www.iu08.org

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Thanks for coming!

